HOWARD KIMELDORF INTERVIEWS FOR *REDS OR RACKETS?*

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INTERVIEWEES: PAUL WARE, UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER

INTERVIEWERS: HOWARD KIMELDORF

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[00:00:00] **HOWARD KIMELDORF:** Just spell your name so I make sure I got it right, ok?

[00:00:05] **PAUL WARE:** Paul Ware.

[00:00:05] **HOWARD:** Ok, how's it spelled?

[00:00:07] **PAUL:** Paul.

[00:00:08] **HOWARD:** Ok. Got it.

[00:00:09] **PAUL:** W-A-R-E.

[00:00:10] **HOWARD:** Ok. Good enough. Why don't you tell me about—well, when did you join the Wobblies? Was it before you came to San Pedro [California] ?

[00:00:18] **PAUL:** Oh, yes, yes. I joined them in Minneapolis [Minnesota] .

[00:00:21] **HOWARD:** Why don't you tell me about that? The year, and why you joined?

[00:00:24] **PAUL:** I was 14 years old when I joined. When the harvest started in North Dakota, I rode up with the Wobblies. This was about—what year it was?

[00:00:53] **HOWARD:** Was it before World War I?

[00:00:57] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes.

[00:00:58] **HOWARD:** It was.

[00:01:06] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You must have been 15.

[00:01:06] **PAUL:** I was 14 years old.

[00:01:06] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** 14 or 15. You must have been 15 at least.

[00:01:07] **PAUL:** 14 or 15. I was 14.

[00:01:10] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh, ok.

[00:01:11] **PAUL:** I was 14.

[00:01:12] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Alright, he was 14.

[00:01:14] **PAUL:** I was born in '95.

[00:01:15] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** About 1910, then.

[00:01:15] **HOWARD:** '95. 1910 or so? Wow, you were in on the ground floor.

[00:01:23] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[00:01:27] **HOWARD:** [laughing]

[00:01:27] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It was formed in, what, 1905?

[00:01:27] **HOWARD:** Yeah. In the Western Federation of Miners, but one of the first.

[00:01:35] **PAUL:** The harvest in the Dakotas required lots of men. Single men. Because the machinery they used then, the old fashioned machinery, you had to have men shocking [stacking for drying] the grain and handling it. Driving it to the stop.

[00:02:06] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** A threshing machine.

[00:02:06] **PAUL:** Yeah. This was a good area for the Wobblies to organize, these individual young people that had come out there. They could make a stake for the wintertime. That's what they generally did; when they was

finished with the harvest, the Wobblies would move towards the coast. Take a freight train, you know; they don't pay any money for riding. That's how the Wobblies come out on the West Coast.

[00:02:43] **HOWARD:** Why did you join the Wobblies? Do you remember the reasons?

[00:02:45] **PAUL:** Why did I? Well, I was more or less of a revolutionist. Around Minneapolis, they had what they called—not a plaza, but in the center part, where workers were getting their job, they would buy their jobs. The IWW started in 1905. And of course most of them moved out west where there was a chance to work. Single people.

[00:03:43] **HOWARD:** You were 14 years old, and you had revolutionary politics. That's hard to believe! [laughing] Where did you pick up your politics? Was your father a radical?

[00:03:54] **PAUL:** No, my father was dead.

[00:03:58] **HOWARD:** He was. How did you pick up politics? Where did you get politics at 14 years old?

[00:04:04] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm thinking the boxcars.

[00:04:05] **HOWARD:** At 14.

[00:04:06] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Riding the boxcars to the wheat fields.

[00:04:09] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[00:04:09] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm sure that these men had enough influence on him.

[00:04:12] **PAUL:** Yeah, you had to have a card when you started coming into the wheat fields because the IWW had members—

[00:04:20] **HOWARD:** Oh, ok, so you weren't a Wobbly when you first went into the wheat fields.

[00:04:24] **PAUL:** Yeah. They had delegates who'd carry their credentials. You stamp up and line up. If you won't line up, well, they won't let you ride on the train. That's all. On the freight trains. They grew fast. Then, at the end of the harvest, you'd move to Seattle [Washington] .

[00:04:40] **HOWARD:** Why Seattle?

[00:04:40] **PAUL:** Come on the freight trains. Some of them spread down through California.

[00:05:09] **HOWARD:** So most of them did go to Seattle?

[00:05:11] **PAUL:** Yeah. When they come to Seattle, if you were not a seaman, you may not make a job there. So you drift down to where there's still harvest in Oregon and northern California. Down into the valley here.

[00:05:28] **HOWARD:** Why did they go to Seattle versus Portland [Oregon] or San Francisco [California] ? Was there a reason?

[00:05:42] **PAUL:** All the trains run into Seattle.

[00:05:44] **HOWARD:** They went to Seattle in those days.

[00:05:46] **PAUL:** You had to go to Seattle before—

[00:05:47] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think also there might be nationality in it.

[00:05:52] **HOWARD:** What do you mean by that?

[00:05:53] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, the upper-middle west is all Scandinavian, and Seattle is Scandinavian.

[00:06:00] **HOWARD:** Portland is, too, but yeah.

[00:06:01] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** But much more so in Seattle.

[00:06:03] **HOWARD:** It is.

[00:06:04] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think that there's always a feeling of brotherhood. I think that's part of the many reasons for the Wobblies going there. But I think the Wobblies would go just as well to San Pedro.

[00:06:09] **HOWARD:** Ok. What did you do? You went to Seattle first, then? After you finished working in the Montana area or whatever, harvesting crops?

[00:06:25] **PAUL:** Working in the harvest fields, then I went into Seattle.

[00:06:27] **HOWARD:** Ok. Then what did you do when you got into Seattle?

[00:06:31] **PAUL:** Well, let's see. The first year I went to Seattle, I went back to my job in Minneapolis. I think I was working for the blueprint company. Then the next year I went back again the same way. About '18, I drifted down through to the. . . [pause] I think I went all the way to San Pedro.

[00:07:34] **HOWARD:** You shipped out of Seattle in 1917, though, is that right?

[00:07:35] **PAUL:** Yeah. I shipped out of Seattle first.

[00:07:42] **HOWARD:** Uh-huh. As a seaman?

[00:07:45] **PAUL:** Made a trip in the Orient—Japan and the Philippines. I can remember so much about the Philippines. The ship was a brand new ship, built in Seattle. The first trip. We went to Manilla, and then we went to an island off the south of the Philippines. We loaded some oil. It was coconut oil, and they squeeze it. They don't do it anymore, expensive. Then we went back to Seattle, and that's all we had.

[00:08:42] **HOWARD:** Were you in Seattle in 1916 at all?

[00:08:44] **PAUL:** '17 I think.

[00:08:44] **HOWARD:** Just '17. Do you remember any—

[00:08:50] **PAUL:** I still remember the war was on. No, it was '17. Because the war was over with.

[00:08:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, the war wasn't over with till '18. That was during the war. '17 was during the war.

[00:09:03] **PAUL:** Well, part of '17.

[00:09:04] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** All of it.

[00:09:07] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[00:09:07] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** All of it. That's ok. Don't have to worry about the exact year.

[00:09:11] **HOWARD:** I'm just wondering if, when you were shipping out as a seaman from Seattle, did you ever have any impression of how many Wobblies there were on the waterfront at that time?

[00:09:21] **PAUL:** There was a few on the waterfront, yeah, the Wobblies.

[00:09:26] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Did they have a hall in Seattle then?

[00:09:33] **PAUL:** Yeah, they had a hall.

[00:09:34] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** So you went to the hall in Seattle.

[00:09:36] **PAUL:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:09:37] **HOWARD:** Ok.

[00:09:38] **PAUL:** Yeah, they had a hall about two blocks from the waterfront.

[00:09:46] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Who were the members? Who were the people, the workers, that were in the hall? What were they doing? What did they do, the men that were in the hall? Were they working on the waterfront? Were they going to sea?

[00:09:59] **PAUL:** Some were working on the waterfront, and some were sailing.

[00:10:03] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Were they carpenters? Or land—were they working right in the city, like road builders or carpenters?

[00:10:14] **PAUL:** A Wobbly, when he carries his own Wobbly card, that doesn't give him a chance to work on any trades. Because a trade union—unless they're really short-handed, then you can get a job with a Wobbly card. But you have to join the trade union, regardless of if you have the Wobbly card. You had to carry the two cards.

[00:10:42] **HOWARD:** How many sailors in Seattle carried the two cards? The Wobbly card and the AF of L [American Federation of Labor] card? Do you have any idea?

[00:10:50] **PAUL:** It just depends on what time of the year? The Wobblies that come into Seattle were the ones that come from the harvest fields.

[00:11:01] **HOWARD:** Ok, what time of the year was that normally? What time of the year did they come in?

[00:11:08] **PAUL:** Say, last part of August.

[00:11:10] **HOWARD:** Last part of August. At that time, how many of the men in Seattle on the waterfront were carrying two cards? What percentage? Was it more than half, in your opinion? Less than half?

[00:11:27] **PAUL:** Well, they had quite a few members in Seattle. Seattle was a headquarters for the Wobblies at that time of the period. We had the guy that died in Centralia [Washington] . . .

[00:11:54] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Were the waterfront workers organized? Were the workers organized in the AF of L?

[00:12:00] **PAUL:** In the AF of L? Oh, sure, they were working on Seattle.

[00:12:04] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And the seamen, too?

[00:12:07] **PAUL:** The seamen, yeah.

[00:12:08] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They also carried the maritime card at that time? Oh ok. At that time?

[00:12:14] **PAUL:** Seattle was a well-organized town.

[00:12:20] **HOWARD:** What I'm trying figure out is how many of the guys on the waterfront do you think were Wobblies at that time?

[00:12:28] **PAUL:** How many?

[00:12:28] **HOWARD:** Yeah, I'm just trying to understand approximately whether it was more than half or less than half. Fred Richardson told me that he thought about 50 to 60 percent of the men on the waterfront, the longshoremen, were Wobblies. I imagine it's even higher among seamen.

[00:12:44] **PAUL:** I don't say that the longshoremen were all organized in the Wobblies. Very few. But the seamen were organized.

[00:12:58] **HOWARD:** Why do you think more of the seamen?

[00:13:00] **PAUL:** There was sailors on top of that—and the firemen's, sailors'—they had about four different organizations. The mates, engineers, the sailors on deck, the firemen and oilers, black gang—they called it "the black gang" when you're working down below.

[00:13:27] **HOWARD:** Why do you think the seamen had more Wobblies among them than the longshoremen? You said more seamen belonged to the Wobblies than longshoremen. Is that right?

[00:13:43] **PAUL:** Well, about the same, I think.

[00:13:45] **HOWARD:** Oh, about the same?

[00:13:46] **PAUL:** Yeah, they were not all lined up in the Wobblies. Because they had to have two cards. It was pretty hard for a guy to decide on what card to hold. You couldn't ship on a Wobbly card; you had to have your seamen or firemen's card, or the mates' or the engineers' card to be able in them days. And it's still the same way.

[00:14:14] **HOWARD:** So, if you had to have an AF of L card anyway—that's what you had to have, right? You had to have an AF of L card, a craft card?

[00:14:20] **PAUL:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:14:21] **HOWARD:** Then why would you get a Wobbly card? If you're just a worker, just a working stiff on the waterfront, you're a sailor, and you belong to the Masters, Mates, and Pilots, or whatever, something like that. Or you're an engineer. What kind of guys would join the Wobblies? And why would they join the Wobblies?

[00:14:41] **PAUL:** For principle.

[00:14:42] **HOWARD:** Principles. What were the principles?

[00:14:42] **PAUL:** Revolutionize and take over the industries.

[00:14:48] **HOWARD:** You think that's what the rank-and-file workers joined for?

[00:14:50] **PAUL:** That's right. That's what the Wobblies wanted to do.

[00:14:53] **HOWARD:** Ok, do you think that the rank-and-file workers joined because of that reason? Or maybe they just kind of liked Wobblies, or they like industrial unionism? You see, the Wobblies had a lot of appeals. You're right—one of them was syndicalism and a revolution.

[00:15:08] **PAUL:** That's right.

[00:15:09] **HOWARD:** Another one was industrial unionism. Another one is they were just real militant guys. And they led slow-downs and things like that. I'm trying to figure out which one of those issues appealed to the men. Now I know you're a Wobbly, so it was the revolution. [laughing]

[00:15:28] **PAUL:** Well, you see, socialists are involved, too. Especially at that time. And the socialists had a similar thing to what the Wobblies had. But the Wobblies were direct actionists. They wanted to get it now. In other words, they wanted to force it through. The socialists, of course, were more or less white collar workers. Like, what's that one? Sinclair Lewis.

[00:16:09] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Not Sinclair Lewis. Upton Sinclair.

[00:16:12] **PAUL:** Upton Sinclair, yeah, Upton Sinclair. Sinclair Lewis—I get those two mixed up.

[00:16:18] **HOWARD:** [laughing] Yeah, right. Ok. I know what you mean.

Why was the Seattle labor movement so radical? Do you have any idea?

[00:16:33] **PAUL:** You mean how radical?

[00:16:35] **HOWARD:** It was real radical, the Seattle labor movement. I know that. It almost got expelled from the AF of L. Why were they so radical? There were socialists and Wobblies and everybody there. Why were they so militant and radical? Do you know?

[00:16:49] **PAUL:** I didn't get it. [meaning Howard's question]

[00:16:51] **HOWARD:** Ok, should I skip over that?

[00:16:53] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think so. I'm listening. I'm thinking. I think that's a question that you can't answer because he was very young, I don't he was that involved in "why" anything happened. More "do." "I will do."

I think the idea of the preamble of IWW, where it states, "The workers of the world will take over the industry," was the thing that appealed to these people. I think there was a lot of corruption in industry, and I think there was a lot of distance between the haves and the have-nots. The have-nots could see no reason for it because they were smart people, too. They had a right to have the land, the industry. Why not work it that way? Of course, at the same time, you had the Russian Revolution that was coming in there. That was showing that it could be done.

[00:17:56] **HOWARD:** So you're saying that it was really the sort of revolutionary feel that he's talking about.

[00:18:00] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, I think it was a revolutionary appeal. Those men and women that I've met or met earlier, when they were still fairly young, this was the thing that appealed to them. It was not to get a job. It was not a protection for a job. They felt that there was corruption and no purpose in the AF of L, except as a job-control thing. They never really liked that idea. That was not the reason for existing in a union and in organization together. They never liked that. They felt, and I believe that this may be very true, that there was corruption even in the AF of L and there was favoritism. It didn't go across the board as an honest kind of a thing. I think they believed that.

[00:18:51] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you a question—

[00:18:52] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think that Seattle is a natural for that because I think there's basically a part of these people that had come across the continent as—they're first generation. Many of them were first generation. They had come out of the crucible of Europe, out of starvation, out of difficult situations, out of no organization. They had to have something to hold them together, didn't they?

[00:19:25] **HOWARD:** Ok, that's interesting to know.

[00:19:28] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** But mostly first generation. I think you're dealing with first generation when you're dealing with Seattle at that time. Either first generation or even immigrants. I think it was definitely so. You're dealing with this—well, it went across North Dakota. North Dakota wasn't even to the point where they almost rebuked the union as under the farmers' union. They couldn't finance—Wall Street, and what they did to Cuba and said, "Sorry, we can't finance anymore. We can't borrow any money." To screw them in that fashion. But there's still a revolutionary feeling, even amongst the farmers there. I think that just sort of flowed right on over. The type of work, waterfront, and seamen are itinerant workers. They're not a person that goes to work at 9 o'clock in the morning and quits at 5. They work maybe 10 hours, and then they may have maybe two weeks off, or a week off. Or a couple of days off. It's not a continuous thing, and that is part of the build-up, too. Rebellion against exact time, punching clocks. They're not punching a clock. I don't know if you thought about it like that, but there is that facet, I think.

[00:20:54] **HOWARD:** I get a sense of that even today on the waterfront.

[00:20:55] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, absolutely, and that's why it attracts certain kinds of people that have more expression of freedom in them, more rebellious, won't accept the things the way they are. Whatever.

[00:21:08] **HOWARD:** See, the problem with that explanation is it would hold true for all waterfronts, including New York. New York becomes very conservative.

[00:21:13] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It doesn't hold for New York.

[00:21:14] **HOWARD:** Why not?

[00:21:14] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I don't know.

[00:21:16] **HOWARD:** [laughing]

[00:21:16] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think New York is basing their past not on the revolution which went across the United States, this IWW movement—because, as they say, it flowed to the West Coast. It did not go the other way at all. If they had anything at all, they had the Socialist Party, which came over with the immigrants into New York. But I don't think they went into the waterfront. And the control became a completely different kind of a thing.

[00:21:47] **HOWARD:** The Wobblies were in New York, on the waterfront. They tried, but they—

[00:21:52] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, uh-huh.

[00:21:53] **HOWARD:** A guy named Walsh, if that name means anything to you.

[00:21:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No strength.

[00:21:57] **HOWARD:** But they never really made any headway.

[00:21:58] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Hmm-mm.

[00:22:01] **HOWARD:** That's one of the conundrums of the research, frankly. Still working on it. I think a lot of it has to do with the stuff you're talking about, this westward migration of the Wobblies and everything else.

[00:22:09] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Uh-huh. And also the kind of people that were involved. I think you find Southern Europe [immigrants] going into New York while you will find Northern Europe [immigrants] going into the West Coast more. Their background is slightly different.

[00:22:30] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[00:22:30] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think you have to go a long way's back to get the whole thing. I hadn't thought about it. I don't know why—

[00:22:39] **HOWARD:** Actually, the point you made is real interesting about the Socialists. The Socialists had a political philosophy and a strategy that didn't really make much sense to waterfront workers. The Wobblies did. The Wobblies said, "Strike on the job. You're a seaman; you're on the waterfront. It's crucial. Any delay will—"

[00:22:55] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And also all strike at once.

[00:22:56] **HOWARD:** Yeah, exactly. The Socialists say go vote in the Parliament or something. Go vote in the Tammany Hall [Democratic Party political society in New York City that supported immigrants] or something.

[00:23:04] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The Wobblies said if the seamen were on strike, the whole waterfront is on strike. We all go on strike. It was a supportive thing in that sense. Of course, that was true on the West Coast. [inaudible] .

[00:23:21] **HOWARD:** I'm trying to compile a list, but this is getting close anyway. Ok.

[00:23:27] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think we should back to the—

[00:23:31] **PAUL:** I don't know where—I guess I—

[00:23:31] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Who were the migrants, who went to New York. They were all migrants, you know.

[00:23:37] **HOWARD:** YEAH.

[00:23:38] **PAUL:** I want to bring this in, that—

[00:23:41] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Bring it in. You're the one. You're our historical mind. [laughing] I'm not it. Not yet!

[00:23:49] **PAUL:** When the Wobblies went up to the harvest fields in North Dakota, they found a problem. That when you come into one of the towns, you'll find about four grain elevators sitting out. They all belong to big companies, these four. So the Wobblies pointed out "There's no sense to you putting your grain in that. Organize like-minded, and get yourself together." He's talking to farmers, "Get yourselves together, and have your own elevator. Put your grain in that." Over a few years, they did. So the Wobblies were very welcomed to North Dakota because they taught them how to run their own economic problems.

Now, of course, that didn't do any good out here in San Pedro. You couldn't do that. But, coming into a city like San Pedro, you have the fishermen. You have everybody there; they all wanted organization. The only way they could they could organize was in one big union. But that didn't do so good, but it made the fishermen organize, too. Then the longshoremen organized. And the sailors organized. All individuals. When they come to a strike, they generally helped themselves. We had two big strikes in San Pedro, and we won out on all of them. Mostly that was done by the Wobblies.

[00:26:11] **HOWARD:** When did you come to San Pedro? What year, do you remember?

[00:26:15] **PAUL:** Yeah, let's see. What year did I come to San Pedro?

[00:26:18] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, I don't know! But maybe about 1919. When you got off the S.S. Argyle or whatever that ship was—when the ship came into San Pedro and you stopped before you got to Seattle—

[00:26:28] **PAUL:** Wait, no, yeah that's right.

[00:26:31] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The steam schooner or whatever it was?

[00:26:32] **PAUL:** Yeah, and I shipped out of San Pedro. '21, I come back to 'Frisco [slang name for San Francisco] . We was on strike.

[00:26:42] **HOWARD:** In '21?

[00:26:42] **PAUL:** Yeah, in '21. And so, of course, instead of staying in San Francisco, Pedro was our hometown. The ship tied up in San Francisco, where everything tied up. That's how I went to Pedro, and I kept on staying in Pedro. When the strike was over, I went to work longshoring.

[00:27:10] **HOWARD:** You weren't in Seattle for the 1919 general strike, were you?

[00:27:15] **PAUL:** General strike?

[00:27:16] **HOWARD:** Yeah, in Seattle, in 1919.

[00:27:17] **PAUL:** No.

[00:27:17] **HOWARD:** Ok, you missed that. So you came down to Pedro in 1919. You floated around and came back in 1921.

[00:27:25] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[00:27:26] **HOWARD:** When did you become a longshoreman then? What year? Do you remember? Or did you work back and forth a lot?

[00:27:36] **PAUL:** I was longshoring off and on.

[00:27:42] **HOWARD:** Oh, you were?

[00:27:42] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[00:27:45] **HOWARD:** Was that common among the men, to go onto shore and work for a while and then go onto the ship? To go back and forth between longshoring and sailing, was that common? Did a lot of men do that?

[00:27:58] **PAUL:** Well, yeah, a lot of them did do that because the longshoremen didn't have any real organization. They had AF of L organization. The only time you could work there was when there was overload, there was too many ships in. They couldn't supply it. Then they had what they called a "fink hall," you put in. You didn't have to have any card at all. The way they operated then was that you could get steady men to stay on one dock, that is for one company. That's about the only place you could work. If there wasn't any ship in for that company, then you was out of work.

[00:29:02] **HOWARD:** That was after the '23 strike, wasn't?

[00:29:06] **PAUL:** No, that was before the strike.

[00:29:08] **HOWARD:** They had a fink hall before the strike? I didn't know that.

[00:29:11] **PAUL:** Of course, when they put up a hall, we called it the fink hall. The only way you could work out of that fink hall was that you had—you didn't have to have no card. But most of them that stayed on the same company, they didn't have to go to the fink hall. But the extra men had to go to the fink hall to go to work.

[00:29:43] **HOWARD:** Ok, so the extra men went to the fink hall. Otherwise you were pretty much a steady company man. Pretty much a regular employee of one company. If you weren't at the fink hall.

[00:29:53] **PAUL:** If you was a regular man, you didn't have to go to the fink hall.

[00:29:57] **HOWARD:** Ok. You said the fink hall—when was it established? Do you know when they established the fink hall? What year?

[00:30:02] **PAUL:** When they established it?

[00:30:05] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[END PART ONE/BEGIN PART 2]

[00:30:05] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Coming down through the mountains today?

[00:30:05] **HOWARD:** It was pretty, yeah.

[00:30:17] **PAUL:** The rest of your life, you keep track of everything that's going on.

[00:30:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** From here on out! I'm going to become a historical monument, from here on out.

[00:30:28] **HOWARD:** Just remember everything he has to say, and you got it. Survive it, too. Ok, why don't you tell me about the 1923 strike? What were the issues, and how did it start? Do you remember?

It was mostly the longshoremen, and it was over criminal syndicalism and a few other issues, right? Let me go off the tape for one second.

[BREAK IN THE RECORDING OF THE INTERVIEW]

[00:31:02] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** 18 months, I think.

[00:31:03] **HOWARD:** 18 months? When were you arrested for criminal syndicalism? What year? Was it '23?

[00:31:16] **PAUL:** I think it was '23.

[00:31:19] **HOWARD:** Were you one of the 28 that was arrested in San Pedro? Was that the group that you were part of?

[00:31:23] **PAUL:** 23?

[00:31:23] **HOWARD:** 28 people were arrested in San Pedro after the '23 strike. There's a lot of numbers here.

[00:31:23] **PAUL:** Yeah, let's see. There was four trials. There was 24 on our trial. There's another group that they started about the same time on the trial. There's 27.

[00:31:24] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right?

[00:31:24] **PAUL:** There was another one with four members. Most of them were all members of the IWW. We were fortunate, our four—I mean, didn't I say twenty-four?—the trial lasted three months. There was another, the 27, that started just about the same time on trial.

We decided that we would fight our own case. We wouldn't have no lawyer. But we had a lawyer—he was one of the Wobbly members. He was a lawyer from Austria. He spoke German. He was a cook. He come over here, and he learned how to cook. He happened to be in Los Angeles [California] visiting us, and he got thrown in jail with us. Well, when we finalized the trial, four of us, the jury brought—were convicted. Including myself. There was four altogether; the lawyer got us out on bail. We didn't want bail anymore, so we went to jail. San Quentin [State Prison] . I did a year. Those on our ward, we were 1-14. Of course the lawyer stayed outside. He was on bail. We could have all the bail we wanted. We had Spencer—what is it?

[00:34:27] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** [Fanny] Bixby Spencer—this is Bixby Spencer.

[00:34:27] **PAUL:** Bixby Spencer.

[00:34:28] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, a big landowner in Long Beach. A large land holder, and still there are Bixby Spencers around the college in Long Beach. The state college [California State University, Long Beach] . There's a big old Bixby Spencer home there.

[00:34:54] **HOWARD:** She was the one that put up the bail money?

[00:34:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** She put up the bail money, and these men—

[00:34:57] **PAUL:** Come over here so I can hear you.

[00:34:59] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[00:35:00] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah. She was the one that encouraged these men—didn't encourage them—supported them financially. She was the one who did it.

[00:35:10] **HOWARD:** What were her politics like? Do you know?

[00:35:12] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** As far as I know, she was an extreme liberal.

[00:35:17] **PAUL:** We had a friend in Long Beach, and her name was Bixby Spencer.

[00:35:21] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's the one.

[00:35:22] **PAUL:** She was the daughter of Spencer—no, of Bixby. Bixby came down from north with a whole lot of sheep. He was a sheep man. And bought up the land that's now Long Beach. City of almost a million now.

[00:35:42] **HOWARD:** Wow.

[00:35:44] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Their home is still there.

[00:35:45] **PAUL:** Yeah. And she was married to a Spencer. He was a carpenter, just a working stiff. But she was interested in what was happening to us, to the Wobblies.

[00:36:00] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And she sat in on the trial, didn't she? Was she there during the trial?

[00:36:05] **PAUL:** She paid bail for us.

[00:36:07] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I know, but was she there in the trial? Did she go to the trial?

[00:36:11] **PAUL:** Well, sometimes. The trial lasted about three months.

[00:36:15] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Uh-huh. She was one of the spectators.

[00:36:19] **PAUL:** We had another one in Pasadena. She was the daughter of—what was she?

[00:36:29] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** [daughter of Henry E.] Huntington?

[00:36:30] **HOWARD:** Oh, yeah, I got all these names already from—Upton Sinclair wrote an article about his experiences. He listed all these people. I think it was Huntington.

[00:36:39] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[00:36:42] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think it was Huntington.

[00:36:43] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you a question. I'm curious. Why were some of the people convicted and some not? Why were some of the arrested Wobblies convicted and some were not convicted? Do you remember what the issues were? You said you were convicted, and some of the other guys were found innocent or not guilty. Is that right?

[00:37:02] **PAUL:** Yeah. They were acquitted, you mean?

[00:37:04] **HOWARD:** Why did they acquit some and not the others?

[00:37:07] **PAUL:** They had to make some kind of a decision. When you're on a jury, and there's different points of views. Some of those were very liberal. When we picked them, we had people outside to check on what kind of a person they was. So we would knock them off—we had the right because we were the—

[00:37:41] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The lawyer. You were your own lawyer. As such the question of the jury.

[00:37:48] **HOWARD:** I thought it was just a movement to railroad, and then everybody who was arrested on criminal syndicalism was just a big net. Anyone who joined the union could be accused of criminal syndicalism in San Pedro.

[00:37:59] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I was about to say, his case was different.

[00:38:01] **HOWARD:** Why?

[00:38:02] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Because he was the guy who signed up the men. He carried the card. He was the organizer for the IWW, and he was carrying the card equipment.

[00:38:15] **HOWARD:** Oh, ok. That's—

[00:38:18] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And he signed up the people. He had this material with him, and he was arrested on that basis, that he was more than just that. He said he was living in a boardinghouse. Well, it was really more than a boardinghouse. In a woman's home where her husband had been killed on the waterfront by stepping on a hatch cover that tilted over. He was there, and his friend was there, [?Harry Lowe?] . There was one other—I think [?Art Ross?] was arrested at the same time. Paul of course was carrying—he was the organizer for the IWW.

[00:38:51] **HOWARD:** He was the main IWW organizer.

[00:38:53] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He was the main, the number one man. When they came in to arrest him, into this home, Mrs. Bloom's home on Sixth Street in San Pedro, they didn't take [?Harry Lowe?] . the reason they didn't take [?Harry Lowe?] is that [?Harry Lowe?] , an immigrant, he was a British citizen I believe, had a cigar box of materials that belonged to him. In that cigar box was a whole series of medals he had won in the war. So he was a hero. Of course, you didn't want that kind of a person arrested. So I never knew

[?Harry Lowe?] , but I've heard about him. That's why he was not arrested. But Art [?Art Ross?] was arrested with you. [?Art Ross?] . You both went to jail together.

[00:39:44] **PAUL:** Yes.

[00:39:44] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And you both—

[00:39:45] **PAUL:** [?Harry Lowe?] —the officer picked up a cigar box, and he opened it up. It was full of—

[00:39:58] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The purple heart and all the things. A ribbon and cross from France.

[00:40:02] **HOWARD:** So he was not arrested.

[00:40:05] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He was a genuine Wobbly, of course, but he was a hero from the war. That does not make good publicity to have that kind of a guy.

[00:40:14] **PAUL:** Poor guy looks—

[00:40:16] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They all went to jail, and stayed in without bail. They came out because they won their appeal. So he's not a convict. He won his appeal. They didn't come out until they won their appeal.

[00:40:29] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right?

[00:40:30] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Nobody came out of San Quentin until they won their appeal, except for one guy. He had a massive heart condition, and they were afraid that he would die. So the guys in San Quentin allowed him to take—not to be pardoned, to be released. I guess any of them could have been released at any time. But they refused to be released until they had won their appeal.

[00:40:57] **HOWARD:** Now, I had heard that, when you were sentenced, the judge gave everyone the option. He said, "If you'll renounce the IWW, you can walk out of court today." And that everyone refused to do that. Never heard that?

[00:41:09] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I never heard that.

[00:41:10] **HOWARD:** When you guys were sentenced, I read that the judge said, "If you guys renounce the IWW, you'll be free." Did that ever happen?

[00:41:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Can you turn that—

[00:41:24] **HOWARD:** Oh, sure.

[BREAK IN RECORDING OF INTERVIEW]

[00:41:25] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** —other trial, where there were 27 went to jail, and they had a lawyer, they all were convicted. That was interesting. He says there was another group of four. Who was in that other group of four? Do you remember?

[00:41:41] **PAUL:** I can't remember who it was.

[00:41:45] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Did they all come to go to San Quentin, or did they go to Folsom [State Prison] , too?

[00:41:49] **PAUL:** Some went to Folsom because they were losers before. On something else.

[00:41:53] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh, I see.

[00:41:54] **PAUL:** Seven in Folsom, and there was seventy. [pause] It was—

[00:41:54] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Almost 100 in San Quentin.

[00:41:56] **PAUL:** 70, I think it was. 70 in San Quentin. The reason there was. . .The [Richard "Blackie"] Ford and [Herman D.] Suhr case was the first ones that were convicted. They were organizing in the hop fields. They raise hops in California. They were taken off of the soapbox. I think they put them in Folsom because they'd lost again—Ford—that's the second time they'd been arrested and served time. They were organizers. I think they did about two more years before we. . .The ones that went to Folsom were ones that had been convicted on something else. But there was three groups in San Quentin—one was 24, one 27, and the other, I think, was four. All at one time.

[00:43:37] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, that seems to be wrong because he said that there were 20 that were acquitted in his group.

[00:43:41] **PAUL:** We had three trials going on in Los Angeles. There was only one more judge that could handle the cases. So they were stuck. We laughed at it.

[00:43:57] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Who were the four that went in with you? Yourself, and Art Ross, and who else was convicted with you? Dutch? The little Dutchman? Do you remember? Art Almeida has all of this information.

[00:44:22] **HOWARD:** I should probably look him up at some point.

[00:44:24] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think you should talk to Almeida because he's done a lot of research in order to write the waterfront history. He's very articulate.

[00:44:34] **HOWARD:** Maybe I'll check him out. Let me ask you some other questions, though, that I can't get from the record. Why were you made the head Wobbly organizer in San Pedro, do you remember?

[00:44:44] **PAUL:** I was what they call a "stationary." You sang for your credential, you know. The organizer credentials to Chicago, to the headquarters. Anybody can do the same thing, that is, Wobblies. If you got a long enough record or so, they'll send it to you. And you organize.

[00:45:11] **HOWARD:** So you'd been an experienced organizer, so they let you—so you were in charge of organizing for the Wobblies in San Pedro. So you'd been there about two years on and off, right? I guess maybe about four or five years, actually.

[00:45:25] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think two is probably more—

[00:45:26] **HOWARD:** Is two accurate?

[00:45:27] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think he was out to sea at least three years. In various jobs.

[00:45:29] **HOWARD:** Oh, ok, he came down there about 1918 but he was in and out of port all the time.

[00:45:34] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I really think so.

[00:45:37] **HOWARD:** So, when the 1923 strike broke out, your case was being tried at that time. Is that what happened? Ok, and the strike involved freeing the class war prisoners, which was you and your friend, right? Is that the chronology, as far you remember it?

[00:45:58] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's probably right. Because I don't believe he was involved in the 1923 strike.

[00:46:01] **HOWARD:** He must not have been then.

[00:46:02] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No. He was in jail.

[00:46:05] **HOWARD:** Well, I know the strike happened on April twenty-fifth of 1923.

[00:46:08] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm sure he was in jail at the time.

[00:46:10] **HOWARD:** Yeah, he was probably already sent off to Leavenworth [United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas] .

[00:46:14] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Not Leavenworth—San Quentin, I hope!

[00:46:15] **HOWARD:** San Quentin, yeah.

[00:46:15] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** San Quentin's bad enough!

[00:46:18] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[00:46:19] **PAUL:** We had two big important strikes—

[00:46:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** When did you go to San Quentin? When was your trial? Was it in the wintertime or in the summertime?

[00:46:35] **PAUL:** The wintertime, I think it was.

[00:46:35] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Must have been right then.

[00:46:37] **HOWARD:** '22 then, right?

[00:46:38] **PAUL:** Yeah, it started in—

[00:46:42] **HOWARD:** Oh, January '23.

[00:46:44] **PAUL:** Right. It started in the wintertime, and finished about—

[00:46:47] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Spring.

[00:46:50] **PAUL:** May, I guess.

[00:46:50] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** April.

[00:46:52] **HOWARD:** Middle of April.

[00:46:53] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[00:46:54] **HOWARD:** Ok, so, you were in jail when the strike took place. [laughing]

[00:47:00] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's right. And I believe he was [inaudible] on his case.

[00:47:03] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you this then—how many Wobblies were on the waterfront when you were there, in the early part of '23? Before you got arrested, when you were around the waterfront.

[00:47:14] **PAUL:** How many was there?

[00:47:15] **HOWARD:** Yeah. About. Of the longshoremen or the seamen, how many of them do you think were Wobblies? Do you have any idea, any way of guessing?

[00:47:26] **PAUL:** Well, it's hard to tell. You see, there's was other—not only longshoremen or seamen. There was fishermen. Quite a few fishermen were members.

[00:47:54] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[00:47:55] **PAUL:** Yeah, it was a big fishing port.

[00:47:57] **HOWARD:** Do you think as many as half the fishermen were Wobblies? Or more than half?

[00:48:03] **PAUL:** Oh yeah. We organized quite a few. We even had. . . What year was it when our hall was raided? Do you remember?

[00:48:24] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You mean the hall in San Pedro? When you had that meeting in the evening? I think that was in 1924.

[00:48:38] **HOWARD:** It was.

[00:48:38] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Toward the end of 1924.

[00:48:40] **PAUL:** About '24.

[00:48:42] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right after he got out of San Quentin.

[00:48:44] **PAUL:** It was a Ku Klux Klan outfit in Pedro. I just come out of jail. [pause]

[00:49:01] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** [?Art Ross?] . [?Art Ross?] must have come out the same time you did.

[00:49:05] **PAUL:** The little binder, a Jew.

[00:49:10] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** [?Tunning?] ?

[00:49:11] **PAUL:** [?Tunning?] ? No.

[00:49:19] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I don't know

[00:49:19] **PAUL:** But anyway, we were in the hall. We had about the size of this building. Bigger than that. There was about 40 or 50 people there in the hall. We had little entertainment. There was two girls on the stage, and they had two boilers to cook coffee in, long boilers, standing right by the stage. When the Ku Klux come in, nobody expected it. They run for the girls and pushed them in the coffee.

[00:50:13] **HOWARD:** The press reported the girls slipped into the coffee. Coffee was spilled accidentally on them. But I heard they actually dipped them in, like that, right.

[00:50:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Massive burns.

[00:50:27] **HOWARD:** When you came back in 1924, did you go back to work on the waterfront at that time, when you got out of jail?

[00:50:36] **PAUL:** Did I? I should have taken a rest!

[00:50:38] **HOWARD:** [laughing]

[MICROPHONE MUTED]

[00:50:45] **PAUL:** I went to work. I didn't go right away. I stayed around Los Angeles for a while. I worked out of the hall. We had a Wobbly hall in Los Angeles. We could pick up jobs from extras in Hollywood; they had a lot of extra jobs. They didn't care if you belonged to anything at all. There was jobs out there. If they needed extras, they would call all the halls, Wobbly halls. The Wobblies, we worked with all those characters.

[00:51:35] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[00:51:36] **PAUL:** For quite a while. Then I went back to Pedro, went back to work.

[00:51:43] **HOWARD:** When did you go back to Pedro? What year?

[00:51:49] **PAUL:** I stayed up in Los Angeles about two years.

[00:51:55] **HOWARD:** So '26. 1926.

[00:51:57] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think it was later than that because you worked on Ben-Hur [Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ, 1925] and Old Ironsides . Now Ben-Hur, I'm not sure, but I think it came out around '27. And Ironsides, I don't remember the year of Ironsides either, but it was a massive sailing ship that was anchored in San Pedro for a long time.

[00:52:23] **HOWARD:** Someone told me about that. It was in a movie.

[00:52:25] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's right, a movie. He worked on it, Ironsides.

[00:52:27] **HOWARD:** You were there for that.

[00:52:29] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Lived in Catalina or something on the Ironsides. And on Ben-Hur for quite a while.

[00:52:34] **HOWARD:** Someone else down at the hall was telling me the same thing. I think it was this guy named John; I can't remember his last name, of course.

[00:52:39] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** So he did work on those films. On the movies for quite a while. Then he was a pile-setter for quite a while. [inaudible] . Then he worked in the oil field for a while. So I don't think he came back to the waterfront as early as a couple of years. I think it was longer, I don't know.

[00:53:02] **HOWARD:** Late '20s at least.

[00:53:05] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think the late '20s, probably '27. '28.

[00:53:07] **HOWARD:** Ok, Paul, when you went back to the waterfront in the late '20s, how many Wobblies were there? Were there any at all?

[00:53:16] **PAUL:** Oh yes. The gang I worked in, out of seven, I guess there was three or four Wobblies in there. Yeah, we had a hall there.

[00:53:37] **HOWARD:** Do you think that gang was unusual in the number of Wobblies? Was that an unusually large number of Wobblies for a gang? Because they were your buddies or something like that?

[00:53:54] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think you're right.

[00:53:56] **HOWARD:** I'm trying to figure out—

[00:53:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You're right on that. Because, see, they were hired as a team of workers out of the fink hall. They still had to go through the fink hall no matter what they were. They were unable to get a job. He was blacklisted. The other Wobblies, they were blacklisted. They were not able to get a job. This individual, who was also the same racial background—I think he was Scandinavian—he was the boss. As the boss, he would hire these men. They were more or less a unit that moved with him and worked with him. Frequently they did not work—in fact, all the time—they did not work under their own name.

[00:54:34] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right?

[00:54:35] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right. Because they were blacklisted.

[00:54:37] **HOWARD:** Let's ask him that. Did you use your own name when you went to work on the waterfront? Or did you use another name?

[00:54:42] **PAUL:** No, I used my own name.

[00:54:43] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You used another name.

[00:54:44] **PAUL:** Huh?

[00:54:45] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** When you working with. . .Not Johanson. [?Nelson?] . Was it [?Nelson?] that had the gang, the haywire [nickname for American-Hawaiian Steamship Company] ? [?Nelson?] ? Wasn't that the gang boss? Who was your gang boss? Nelson? Was it [?Nelson?] ?

[00:55:02] **PAUL:** How do you spell it?

[00:55:03] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** [?Nelson?] . Wasn't it [?Nelson?] ? That's not Scandinavian.

[00:55:04] **PAUL:** I worked with [?Nelson?] .

[00:55:04] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, at the haywire. You sometimes used different names. Because you were blacklisted.

[00:55:17] **PAUL:** No, I wasn't, not at that time.

[00:55:21] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Not at first.

[00:55:22] **PAUL:** No.

[00:55:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** But when did you become blacklisted?

[00:55:24] **PAUL:** We had a strike that got rid of all that. We won too.

[00:55:26] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** But you were blacklisted in the late '20s. And in the '30s. There was no strike.

[00:55:38] **HOWARD:** He's thinking of the '34 strike.

[00:55:39] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, no, no. No blacklisting after the '34 strike.

[00:55:41] **HOWARD:** No, I know. That's what he's talking about.

[00:55:42] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, no. You got rid of it in 1934, yes. But you were blacklisted before that.

[00:55:48] **PAUL:** Oh, yes.

[00:55:49] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** When they were paying you 75¢/a day. [laughing] But you worked with [?Nelson?] on the haywire.

[00:55:58] **PAUL:** I worked the haywire—

[00:55:58] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** With [?Nelson?] because he was willing to take a chance on you fellows—

[00:56:04] **PAUL:** That's right.

[00:56:06] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Though you were blacklisted, and you would sometimes use different names in order to get your paycheck, right?

[00:56:14] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[00:56:16] **HOWARD:** That sounds reasonable. What I'm trying to figure out is how many Wobblies are still there after '23. And how they were able to survive.

[00:56:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh, I think that was the one way they survived.

[00:56:25] **HOWARD:** By working under fictitious names.

[00:56:27] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Fictitious names and by sympathies. Some of the fellows who had control over these smaller jobs. The gang boss would have control over the smaller jobs. He would know these

men. Know they were good workers, there was nothing wrong with their work. Would know them and empathize. Was in empathy with them anyway; probably thought much as they did, and would hire them.

[00:56:52] **HOWARD:** I heard the Wobblies were the best workers in fact on the front at that time—

[00:56:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I don't think there was a question about it—

[00:56:56] **HOWARD:** —and that was one of the reasons—

[00:56:58] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** —they were workers.

[00:56:58] **HOWARD:** —very experienced guys. Was that true? Were the Wobblies real experienced workers? Good workers?

[00:57:04] **PAUL:** Yeah?

[00:57:04] **HOWARD:** Were they? Did a lot of employers hire them after '23 because they were so good workers?

[00:57:16] **PAUL:** Hired them what?

[00:57:19] **HOWARD:** Did the employers hire the Wobblies after 1923 at all? Were any Wobblies hired after 1923? Do you know?

[00:57:25] **PAUL:** Yeah?

[00:57:27] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Were you hired on the waterfront?

[00:57:29] **PAUL:** Yeah, they were hired. They were.

[00:57:33] **HOWARD:** Because they were good workers? Or why?

[00:57:38] **PAUL:** You have to do your own share. If you're a Wobbly or not—if you don't do your own share, get out of the gang. It's that simple. Because if you want to lay down. . .

[00:57:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Then someone else carries you.

[00:57:58] **PAUL:** The hook is hanging on your side all the time. That don't work.

[00:58:02] **HOWARD:** I heard that the Wobblies were great in breaking guys in, that they taught them all the work rules. They taught them how to do the work the easiest way.

[00:58:09] **PAUL:** Yeah, mm-hmm.

[00:58:09] **HOWARD:** They just sounded like fabulous characters, I'll tell you.

[00:58:11] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm sure that this is true. And there was empathy amongst the smaller bosses. He would have control over his unit, which would be, I think, 8 men that would go on as a gang. He had control over which ones went into his gang. This guy worked on what they called "haywire," American-Hawaiian Shipping [American-Hawaiian Steamship Company] . He was a steady man, but he could hire from the fink hall his men, and he got these men. And he hired them.

[00:58:43] **HOWARD:** Were they basically extras, then?

[00:58:44] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They were extras.

[00:58:46] **HOWARD:** But they worked consistently as a group.

[00:58:48] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** As a group because there weren't necessarily any other men in the small bosses who would be willing to take a chance on these people that were blacklisted. They didn't want them. But I imagine there must have been others because it was a nest of Wobblies, as I understand it. As he said, they still maintained a hall. Well, they don't maintain a hall without a fairly large membership and pay their dues. They had to pay dues, and dues weren't that much. Maybe a dollar a month or something. So, yes, I would say that there were a number of men, but I know that, in this case, it was this man who did it without favors. They also gave jobs to the men from the fink hall for favors. If you wanted a job, you would work alright, but the next time you saw him, you better bring him a gallon of wine. Or a ham, or something. I don't think this guy ever accepted anything. He was a decent guy. There were others, I'm sure. American-Hawaiian, I think, is one that didn't question the men that worked there.

[00:59:52] **HOWARD:** Is that right? So it depended on the employer in part.

[00:59:54] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Employer and the boss.

[00:59:55] **HOWARD:** The boss. That's interesting.

[00:59:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And who was working.

[01:00:01] **HOWARD:** I wonder if it had anything to do with the nature of the cargo that the employer handled. If it was a difficult cargo to handle, it may have been necessary to have real experienced men. They may have been forced to hire undesirable Wobblies who knew how to do—

[END PART TWO/BEGIN PART THREE]

—Wobblies were good at that, especially because their lumber experience in the Northwest.

[01:00:20] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes. They did, and the lumber was hard to do. I think the American-Hawaiian was a miscellaneous cargo kind of a thing. I'm not sure on that.

[01:00:35] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you a general question. When you came to work in the late '20s and early '30s, before 1934, when you're on the waterfront, did you ever do any work stoppages or slowdowns, or little strikes? Do you remember anything like that?

[01:00:50] **PAUL:** You mean the '20s?

[01:00:51] **HOWARD:** Yeah, late '20s and early '30s. Any little strikes or work stoppages? Slow-downs? That you can remember?

[01:00:59] **PAUL:** Well, the only time they generally stop was if it was unsafe, the gear was unsafe. Some of these foreign ships would come in there. The boom is maybe cracked or something. The wires are stranded. Just wait till you get it fixed up. You stay there. You get paid on it. Safety first.

[01:01:27] **HOWARD:** Ok. The men went for that. The men supported—

[01:01:30] **PAUL:** You can't overdo it, you know.

[01:01:32] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Did you do that before you were organized in 1933? Did you do that in 1930 and '31? '32? Did you have short stoppages because of that?

[01:01:47] **PAUL:** Yes. Even in the—you're working against your day and ten [inaudible] —the load could be over the top of you. You wanted to slow it down. Then the employer or the ship boss would say, "Well, you're fired." But then they can't get another gang. Because they won't go down there; it's not safe.

[01:02:18] **HOWARD:** So safety was an issue you could pretty much strike on.

[01:02:19] **PAUL:** Safety comes first. We had too many killed on the waterfront.

[01:02:28] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It wasn't a strike; it was a stoppage because it was safety. Another gang wouldn't pick it up.

[01:02:31] **PAUL:** One day we was sitting in the shack on Sixth—

[01:02:38] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Was it Bloom, Mrs. Bloom's?

[01:02:39] **PAUL:** Mrs. Bloom's place. Bloom was a longshoreman. When we was sitting there, she got the message. We weren't normal jobs. You don't always work every day. We were sitting there talking about safety conditions. Somebody come and told Mrs. Bloom that he husband was killed while we were sitting there.

[01:03:20] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[01:03:21] **PAUL:** What a sad thing. He was an ex-miner. It was a steel boat. Flat steel they use for building ships and so forth. You have to drag some of them out to the wing and pile them up in the wing. On the square of the hatch you have the pieces like this. One here, two-inch pieces. The hatch covered the top. They unloaded all the freight underneath. About 30 feet down. Unloaded that, then they pulled the steel plates out on the center with this gear. You drop it down there. Nobody seen them pull that hatch, so it was just about hanging like this. Bloom come walking out to change the gear on this piece of steel. He went right down. Landed on his head.

[01:04:41] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[01:04:43] **PAUL:** Those are the kind of cases you have.

[01:04:46] **HOWARD:** What was it like working in the late '20s? Was the work real hard?

[01:04:49] **PAUL:** Huh?

[01:04:50] **HOWARD:** In the late '20s when you went to work on the waterfront, was the work real hard?

[01:04:58] **PAUL:** It depends on what kind you handle.

[01:05:02] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They were muscle [inaudible] . [laugh]

[01:05:08] **PAUL:** It depends. The heavier stuff is the easiest. But if you get on sacks, big, heavy, 200-pound sacks, you take 9 sacks in a sling load. You can't take over a ton. 2,000 pounds. The gear won't hold anything over so much—unless you have a special steel gear, where you have to handle steel plates that are heavier. You have to change the gears.

[01:05:53] **HOWARD:** So, there was a limit to the sling load only because the equipment couldn't handle over a ton? Is that right?

[01:06:04] **PAUL:** That's right. The only thing you weren't supposed to take was nothing over 200 [sic] pounds unless they double-up the gear. What they call "doubling up" the gear.

[01:06:18] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He's talking about 2,000 pounds.

[01:06:19] **HOWARD:** Ok, but it wasn't out of any agreement because they felt that the workers—

[01:06:23] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh no.

[01:06:23] **HOWARD:** Limitations of the machinery.

[01:06:26] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Limitations of the machinery. Not because they were taking care of the workers. They were expendable.

[01:06:31] **HOWARD:** Did you have to work long hours sometimes?

[01:06:34] **PAUL:** Yeah, finishing it.

[01:06:42] **HOWARD:** Stayed there till it's finished.

[01:06:45] **PAUL:** Say, for instance, you got two or three hours over. And your time is up—your 8 hours is up. They say, "What do you want to do? You want to send for a gang for two hours?" "No, I wouldn't go out for two hours." So you finish it.

[01:07:17] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That was after the strike. Before the strike, they could go out and they would be assigned to a job. If they were in the harbor, and they were not available to the dock. If they were in the harbor, and you had to unload a ship in the harbor, which they did occasionally, they might work as long as 36 hours without stopping.

[01:07:36] **HOWARD:** Yeah, I heard.

[01:07:36] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, that's correct. And frequently, yeah, they worked over 20 and 24 hours. Without stopping. They did not order a new gang or anything. They just let them work until the job was done.

[01:07:51] **HOWARD:** What was the point of that?

[01:07:52] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Why? I don't know. Because they don't get maximum work out of them. But they did it all the time. If a man went into work, he never knew when he would come home. If you really wanted to know, he would have to call the ship owners. Call that particular steamship company and find out if the boat was still out there, still working.

I know I had called a number of times, and they would say, "He's out drinking in the beer hall." I said, "You're mistaken. The ship is still out there." You'd trace the ship, and finally you'd find the ship is still working. They would work fantastic hours, and then they would be completely exhausted. For days, really. I don't know why they did it because I think there was overtime pay.

[01:08:43] **HOWARD:** Yeah, there was.

[01:08:44] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think there was.

[01:08:45] **HOWARD:** They may have been cheating them out of it.

[01:08:48] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, they were never cheated on that basis. I'm sure they weren't. Because they would have really done something. It couldn't have been much. It couldn't have been half, which is what they finally got on their strike. It must have been less than half. Whatever it was, yes, they did work long hours, and hard. For instance, a banana boat would come in, and they'd haul these banana hands. All day long, 18 or 20 hours before you stop. That's a long time to work.

[01:09:20] **PAUL:** Don't work too hard!

[01:09:21] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I know, it's getting so hot up in here, I can't stand it! So many big times! Banana hands and everything else around here, I can't stand it. We have a rule—no working on the piles. [laughing] But that's true—they did work long hours. Correct.

[SOUND OF THE MICROPHONE BEING TOUCHED]

[01:09:44] **HOWARD:** You're going to lose that. [Referring to the microphone]

Let me ask you this question again. By the time of the 1934 strike, about how many Wobblies were on the waterfront? Do you have any way of estimating? Was it as much as 10 percent of the longshoremen?

[01:10:10] **PAUL:** Well, I don't think it was very many paying dues.

[01:10:14] **HOWARD:** Yeah. But how about guys—whether they paid or not—were close to the Wobblies, believed in the Wobblies?

[01:10:27] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Or had been Wobblies?

[01:10:31] **HOWARD:** Or had been Wobblies? I don't care if they paid dues or not. I'm just trying to figure out how many Wobblies there were!

[01:10:37] **PAUL:** [laughing]

[01:10:37] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** [laughing]

[01:10:37] **HOWARD:** Tell me there were a lot! I'll never ask you again! [laughing]

[01:10:40] **PAUL:** They folded up in '77.

[01:10:44] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, no. No, no, on the waterfront. Before you organized in 1933, how many of the men who were working in and around the waterfront were Wobblies or had been Wobblies? Did you still have your hall in San Pedro?

[01:11:05] **PAUL:** Yeah, we had a hall.

[01:11:06] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** In San Pedro? You only had your hall in Los Angeles then.

[01:11:11] **HOWARD:** That was in Pedro in '33.

[01:11:13] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Is was in Pedro in ‘33? Alright, then, if you were in the hall in 1933 in San Pedro, how many of the Wobblies that came to the hall were working on the waterfront? About?

[01:11:24] **PAUL:** Now, you mean?

[01:11:25] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, no, then, in 1933. How many were Wobblies? 100 then?

[01:11:36] **PAUL:** Well, that’s taking in fishermen and everything?

[01:11:38] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We’re talking about mostly waterfront workers. Would there have been 100 or 200?

[01:11:45] **PAUL:** No, I wouldn’t say that.

[01:11:46] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** 100?

[01:11:48] **PAUL:** 50.

[01:11:49] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Of the organizers of the union, of the men who organized the union, ILA [International Longshoremen’s Association] union in 1933, how many of them were Wobblies?

[01:11:59] **PAUL:** At the ILA?

[01:12:02] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Uh-huh, when you first started. Of those, how many had been Wobblies? 50? 60?

[01:12:12] **PAUL:** About 50, maybe. I stamped them all up—

[01:12:17] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You should know.

[01:12:17] **PAUL:** Yeah, I should know. It depends on what time of the year because, when the fishermen come back from Alaska, most of them had Wobbly cards. And I would stamp them all. There were other “floaters”—we called them “floaters.”

[01:12:52] **HOWARD:** So when you organized the ILA in 1933, in San Pedro, there were about 50 Wobblies involved in it, in the longshore industry. Ok, that’s a significant number.

[01:13:07] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** But that isn’t the reason for the organization of the ILA. That they could organize at that time.

[01:13:17] **HOWARD:** Ok, what was the reason?

[01:13:18] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The reason was that [U.S. President Franklin D.] Roosevelt was in, and he had lifted the—he had endorsed—I forget exactly what it was, what the act it was he did.

[01:13:33] **HOWARD:** Section 7A of the NRA [National Recovery Administration] . That made unions legal.

[01:13:35] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, that permitted men to organize, people to organize. They had been permitted finally to organize. They could not organize on the waterfront, and they had dropped membership in the ILA. The ILA had existed up until 1933, but they had dropped it as the men had become just separate individuals through the late ‘20s and the early ‘30s.

[01:14:02] **HOWARD:** So the ILA existed at that time?

[01:14:04] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** There had been an ILA organization before.

[01:14:07] **HOWARD:** I thought it had been completely smashed.

[01:14:09] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It was smashed to the extent that people were not paying their dues on their cards any longer. They didn't dare to reorganize. When this came in, it was essential that ones who organize the new union, the ILA, be the bosses. The supervisors. The steady men, really, on the waterfront. Because it would have had no stature if these itinerant workers went in. So you'll find the names of the men who went in were steady men. Who came in and organized the outfit. With the spring or the impetus coming from workers in the IWW. I think.

[01:15:00] **HOWARD:** So you're saying the motive force in '33 really was the Wobbly men, but the guys who took the leadership upfront publicly—

[01:15:08] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, who were up at the front, were steady men.

[01:15:10] **HOWARD:** That was because it would make it look more legitimate and everything else.

[01:15:13] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right. This is the analysis of a number of people who were there at the time. You look at the names of the guys who took officer-ship at that time. They were steady men, and that gave stature to the organization.

[01:15:31] **HOWARD:** That seems reasonable.

[01:15:32] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's my analysis. But, anyway, I'm talking all about it.

[01:15:38] **HOWARD:** That's important to note. That sounds very plausible.

[01:15:40] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's the way it went because these men working as extras out of the fink hall would not be able to organize the waterfront. It had to come from the men who were working on the waterfront with the blessing of the ship owners as steady men. They're the ones who were there.

[01:16:02] **HOWARD:** But clearly the Wobblies played an instrumental role in this thing, even at that late date.

[01:16:06] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right. Chris Johanson had number one. He was the first one to sign for the charter. He was number one, and he was a Wobbly. Paul was number six, and he was a Wobbly. There were 25 men that signed a request to the ILA to get a charter from New York, I believe. Of those 25 men—I don't know how many there were—one was Paulie [Ware] . He was number six. He was known as number six all the time he worked. His buddy, Chris Johanson was number one. He died quite some time ago. My analysis at the present time is that there's only one other person left of those 25.

[01:16:50] **HOWARD:** Who's that?

[01:16:52] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I don't know his name, but I know it when I see it. Remember when we were up Yucaipa [California] , to the picnic? In the spring? We go to the picnic every spring. Of the longshoremen. Remember the fellow that's in the wheelchair? He's been in a wheelchair for a long time.

[01:17:14] **PAUL:** Who?

[01:17:15] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That guy that comes to the picnic all the time that's in a wheelchair. He's kind of shaky. What's his name? Gordon would be able to give you that.

[01:17:25] **HOWARD:** Would he? Ok.

[01:17:25] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You can identify him quickly. He's in a wheelchair, and I believe it is his wife that brings him. But he was there at Yucaipa in May. So he's still alive. But I don't believe he was a Wobbly, but he may have been. I don't know anything about him except that he was one of the 25 that signed for the charter. Now, there were a number of longshoremen that were on the waterfront before that time but were not involved in sending for the charter. They each had to put up $1, and, when the application was ready, Paul put the application in the mailbox with a stamp on it.

[01:18:08] **HOWARD:** Is that right? [laughing] He's a historical figure!

[01:18:08] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I call him a historical monument! So there you are. That was in '33.

[01:18:17] **PAUL:** I can't remember his name.

[01:18:20] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, you know the guy.

[01:18:21] **PAUL:** I know the guy, but I can't think of his name.

[01:18:23] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I've heard his name, but I don't remember.

[01:18:26] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you some questions about the '34 strike. Do you remember that pretty well? The strike in 1934? Do you remember that?

[01:18:33] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[01:18:35] **HOWARD:** What can you tell me about that? Any little interesting incidents? Or just tell me about the strike itself. How did it develop, and anything else you remember about it.

[01:18:49] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** What was your job in the 1934 strike?

[01:19:04] **HOWARD:** He was in the bar drinking with the men, right?

[01:19:05] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He never did that.

[01:19:06] **PAUL:** I don't want to think about work!

[01:19:09] **HOWARD:** [laughing]

[01:19:10] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, no, was it the 1934 strike that you were a captain downtown in Los Angeles? Weren't you and Maurice the captains downtown? And you monitored the hiring hall in Vernon [California] ? Then you'd let them know—this is a scab thing—when the finks from Vernon were hired out of the hiring hall in Vernon. You and Maurice were up there monitoring it.

[01:19:46] **PAUL:** Uh-huh.

[01:19:46] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** See, they monitored all the places.

[01:19:48] **HOWARD:** Where's Vernon?

[01:19:53] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It's in East Los Angeles where the meatpacking industry is. It's a small—

[01:19:56] **HOWARD:** That's where they hired scabs to send them down?

[01:19:59] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They had a hiring hall there. They had a number of hiring halls.

[01:20:02] **HOWARD:** Oh, they did?

[01:20:02] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes. Halls from which they got the scabs in Los Angeles. They were all monitored by the longshoremen.

[01:20:10] **HOWARD:** Then when a group was coming down—

[01:20:11] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They would know they were coming, and they knew how they were coming there. And they knew who they were, and they would put their own men in.

[01:20:19] **HOWARD:** What do you mean, as picket line?

[01:20:21] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, as scabs, so that they would be inside working.

[01:20:25] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[01:20:25] **HOWARD:** What would be the advantage of that?

[01:20:26] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They would know what's going on, and you could sabotage the thing.

[01:20:30] **HOWARD:** Is that right? [laughing]

[01:20:31] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Absolutely.

[01:20:33] **PAUL:** They set up a big tent for the scabs.

[01:20:36] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, but they got some of their own men in.

[01:20:38] **HOWARD:** So they put their own men inside to find out what was going on. Do you know for a fact that they did sabotage or that sabotage took place?

[01:20:45] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes. You can delete that. [meaning delete the info from the record]

[01:20:51] **HOWARD:** Ok, I'll say that's an anonymous source. That's great.

[01:20:53] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, I can even tell you the kind of sabotage they did.

[01:20:55] **HOWARD:** Well, why don't you—I'll take it off the record. Ok.

[BREAK IN THE RECORDING OF INTERVIEW]

[01:20:59] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And he was a captain. That was one of his jobs. What else did you do? Were you an officer then, in the strike? In the ILA in 1934? Were you one of the officers?

[01:21:12] **PAUL:** Officers? What kind of an officer?

[01:21:14] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** In the ILA. No, no, no, no, no, no, no. Because, as I said, the officers came from the steady men.

[01:21:25] **HOWARD:** But he was like a picket captain or something like that.

[01:21:26] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, a picket captain.

[01:21:30] **PAUL:** I was vice president—what do you mean?

[01:21:31] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, you weren't vice president then.

[01:21:33] **PAUL:** Not then, no, later on.

[01:21:38] **HOWARD:** When they would bring scabs to the waterfront in 1934, did the ILA set up picket lines to keep the scabs out?

[01:21:51] **PAUL:** Yeah.

[01:21:51] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They had picket lines all the time.

[01:21:59] **HOWARD:** How many men were on the picket lines, do you remember?

[01:22:01] **PAUL:** Was it the '34 strike?

[01:22:01] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, you had scabs.

[01:22:09] **PAUL:** We had in '34?

[01:22:10] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, and you had picket lines all the time. 24 hours a day.

[01:22:18] **PAUL:** And they—

[01:22:18] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And everybody picketed.

[01:22:18] **PAUL:** Yeah. We had the scabs in Wilmington on the—

[01:22:29] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** In the tent.

[01:22:31] **PAUL:** That's the night we were going to go over there and get rid of them. The cops were down there. They found out all about it. Two guys got shot; one got killed.

[01:22:53] **HOWARD:** Yeah, Dickie Parker [Richard Parker] .

[01:22:55] **PAUL:** The other one recovered from his wounds.

[01:22:59] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's when the five were killed in San Francisco on Sunday.

[01:23:02] **HOWARD:** Five?

[01:23:03] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I believe it was five.

[01:23:04] **HOWARD:** Two, I think.

[01:23:05] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Was it only two in San Francisco?

[01:23:06] **HOWARD:** Yeah, Nick Bordoise and another guy.

[01:23:08] **PAUL:** The first guy they grabbed was me, when the cops come. They got me and threw me in their wagon. Their cars are made so that you can't get out. Finally a guy come on by, one of my fellow workers, I says, "Come over here. Open it!" So I walked out. When I saw the cop, I said, "That's a hell of car you got there!" [laughing] We tried really to burn the goddamn tent down, where the scabs were. But it didn't work.

[01:24:02] **HOWARD:** How many guys showed up for that rally that night? Do you remember that?

[01:24:06] **PAUL:** Everybody that was available was there!

[01:24:06] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[01:24:06] **PAUL:** Yeah, they were all there.

[01:24:11] **HOWARD:** Was it as many as 500?

[01:24:13] **PAUL:** No, I wouldn't say that. No, that would be too many.

[01:24:17] **HOWARD:** Maybe 300 or something like that.

[01:24:19] **PAUL:** About 300, I guess.

[01:24:21] **HOWARD:** Ok. Let me ask you a question before I forget this—because it's really important. Let's go back a few years now, to 1927 again. Ok, '27-28. When you came to work on the waterfront in 1927-28, did you ever talk about the 1923 strike with people? Did people ever ask you questions about what the Wobblies stood for?

[01:24:49] **PAUL:** In '23 you said?

[01:24:50] **HOWARD:** No, the late '20s and early '30s. I'm trying to figure out if you ever talked about the Wobblies anymore.

[01:24:59] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, they were still meeting.

[01:25:00] **HOWARD:** They were still meeting.

[01:25:01] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Sure.

[01:25:02] **HOWARD:** But they were very secretive, right?

[01:25:03] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, huh-uh. They had a hall in Los Angeles. And they were not secretive. They had social organizations going on all the time.

[01:25:12] **HOWARD:** They did?

[01:25:12] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They got together with big picnics and dances and all kinds of things.

[01:25:16] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right?

[01:25:17] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right? They were very active in that sense. The same people were together as friends, and they were known as Wobblies.

[01:25:25] **HOWARD:** Were they doing anything on the job, do you know? Talking on the job to the men?

[01:25:30] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm sure they were. I'm sure they were talking on the job as organizers, as Wobblies. There was nothing to keep from doing it. When they got together, they had political discussions and discussions on their job of their philosophies. I consider them a very active group. The Socialist Worker Party—

[01:25:59] **HOWARD:** The Alliance [Workers Alliance of America, established by the Socialist Party] or something?

[01:26:00] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, no, no, no, no, the Workers' Socialist Party. They were big. Together with the IWW, they were all over. They were a social group as well as a group that got together to talk and a group that continuously heard lectures from each other or from outsiders. They were an active group. They met down on Spring Street in Los Angeles.

[01:26:25] **HOWARD:** See, what I'm trying to get a sense of—I think the '23 strike was—

[01:26:30] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It didn't kill them!

[01:26:31] **HOWARD:** —was critical, though. It sort of—you used the word "crucible," and I think that's really what it was for the people that survived in one form or another. I'm trying to think if the old-timers like Paul were able to communicate those lessons to the new guys coming onto the waterfront. Everyone knows him, so he was communicating something. And they all know him as a Wobbly from the '23 strike.

[01:26:50] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's right, he never stopped organizing.

[01:26:52] **HOWARD:** He may have been unusual, but—I'm trying to get a sense of whether he was talking about it and stuff like that.

[01:26:58] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It was being talked all the time. I'm sure it was talked over the coffee cups and the beer halls.

[01:27:02] **HOWARD:** You're sure about that.

[01:27:03] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm positive.

[01:27:05] **HOWARD:** Because a couple of other guys told me—

[01:27:07] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Nobody talked about it.

[01:27:08] **HOWARD:** They couldn't figure it out. They knew they were Wobblies, but they would never talk about it. If they approached them, they would clam up.

[01:27:15] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I don't believe this has been a trait that I would associate with a Wobbly.

[01:27:18] **HOWARD:** I can't imagine it, either. But after the criminal syndicalism and everything else, I could see getting a little gun-shy.

[01:27:23] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, they weren't gun-shy on the criminal syndicalism. They went to jail when they didn't have to. They stayed in jail until they won their appeal.

[01:27:29] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[01:27:30] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** But they were acquitted. When they didn't have to. They weren't gun-shy. They weren't worried about themselves and what happens to them. Because they were a part of the working class, and you are your brother's keeper. This was their thing. I think. I think it runs through their characters.

[01:27:52] **HOWARD:** It makes sense to me. I'm just trying to reconcile my image, which is yours, with what other people have told me.

[01:27:58] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think that you're talking perhaps to the ones who were gun-shy, the ones who had home and families and were protecting what little they had and tried to keep their mouths shut on the waterfront so they could continue to work. Remember, they couldn't do work because they were blackballed. If you're blackballed, you're not earning anything. You may earn $5/a week. It's not going to go very far. If you have a family, that's more than you can take. But these itinerant workers, many of them either had rebel girls who were also working, many times poorly, but at least bringing something in, or were without attachments. They had no home; they had no family; they had no children to support. If you look at the early '30s, there were no children born in that time. The reason for them not being born at that time, because it was economic. Now we get into that again with Mr. Reagan, see?

[01:28:54] **HOWARD:** Yeah, right.

[01:28:55] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Gives us another year, he'll get rid of our unemployment, then we're going to be in trouble.

[01:28:59] **HOWARD:** That's right. Were you a Wobbly?

[01:29:02] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No.

[01:29:02] **HOWARD:** No? Just well-informed.

[01:29:04] **PAUL:** She?

[01:29:05] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm well-informed. [laughing]

[01:29:07] **PAUL:** She'd have to work first! [laughing]

[01:29:11] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think it's interesting to read this stuff, and I associated with a lot of these men and women. Many of them have passed on, but they never hesitated to let you know what they thought.

[01:29:24] **HOWARD:** Of course, you they trusted. Paul, they trusted.

[01:29:27] **PAUL:** She was a principal of a high school!

[01:29:32] **HOWARD:** [laughing] Oh, is that right?

[01:29:33] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, it wasn't a matter of trust. It was a matter of being sure of what they thought. They were not afraid of what was around the corner. They were never afraid. If it meant that tomorrow you don't eat, you don't eat—that's all. If you don't have a job tomorrow because you've expressed your thoughts, tough luck. But you've expressed your thoughts and been your own man. And I believed that. I felt that in these people.

Old [?Freida Lance?] would sit there and say, "Well, I went out there on the picket line in the garment industry." She wouldn't hesitate to go out on the picket line. Now tomorrow she might have been blackballed and might have never had another job. It wouldn't occur to her not to go.

[END PART THREE/BEGIN PART FOUR]

[inaudible]

[01:30:34] **HOWARD:** Ok, that seems to square with my impression as well.

[01:30:37] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes. They were daring—they never considered themselves daring. They would consider themselves honest.

[01:30:43] **HOWARD:** And principled.

[01:30:44] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And principled. And honest. We cannot improve our working situation unless we hang together, and we've got to do it, even though it is a difficult situation. Whatever happens to us personally has nothing to do with. Like ants on a hill. We must work together to improve the situation. I believe this was their philosophy. They didn't back down from it. I don't think any of them did.

[01:31:17] **PAUL:** It's better to hang together than to hang separately. [laughing]

[01:31:20] **HOWARD:** Yeah. At least you've got a chance.

[01:31:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yep. The other side is hanging together.

[01:31:25] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[01:31:26] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The opposition. The employer class. They were hanging together, and as a result, they were lining their pockets and living affluently. These guys are doing the work. But they're not getting paid for it. It wasn't just work; it was more than this. It was philosophy and brotherhood and sisterhood. Their feeling was the same about the rebel girl.

[01:31:57] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you about the ‘34 strike also. You said there were about 50 Wobblies there in San Pedro. How about members of the Communist Party? The Marine Workers Industrial Union? Were the communists active on the waterfront in the ‘30s?

[01:32:17] **PAUL:** Oh, yes, there was commies, yeah.

[01:32:19] **HOWARD:** How active were they? Do you remember things that they did, rallies they called or anything?

[01:32:25] **PAUL:** Were there how many?

[01:32:29] **HOWARD:** Yeah, how many and how active?

[01:32:31] **PAUL:** It wasn’t very many. But there was a few, yeah. Especially the fishermen.

[01:32:45] **HOWARD:** It’s one o’clock?

[01:32:47] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You’re only to the 1934 strike! You didn’t get anywhere! [laughing]

[01:32:51] **HOWARD:** Hold on one second, my—

[BREAK IN THE RECORDING OF THE INTERVIEW]

So you said there were a handful of communists in the ‘34 strike. Just a small number.

[01:33:00] **PAUL:** I don’t know how many.

[01:33:01] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Wasn’t she here?

[01:33:02] **HOWARD:** No, she must know that when I say “two hours,” it means two and a half. She’ll be here in a bit, I’m sure. Do you remember them handing out their radical newspapers, the communists? Did they ever hand out The Western Worker or anything like that?

[01:33:22] **PAUL:** Well, I couldn’t say how many, but I knew there was a few.

[01:33:31] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you another kind of a question. When you went back to work, after 1934, after the strike, what were working conditions like? Were they better?

[01:33:45] **PAUL:** Yes, better, and I don’t know if we built the hall—we had a hall. [movement rubbing on the microphone] What time did we build that hall?

[01:34:08] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, you didn’t build your hall in Wilmington.

[01:34:09] **PAUL:** ‘34?

[01:34:10] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Quite a bit later. Well, you had a hall in San Pedro.

[01:34:13] **PAUL:** Yeah, in San Pedro.

[01:34:15] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Four or five years, I guess.

[01:34:19] **PAUL:** They got the year on the front of the hall, too! I can't remember. [laughing]

[01:34:24] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The point is, it eliminated the fink hall and gave them control of their own dispatching.

[01:34:32] **HOWARD:** Yeah. I'm trying to think, see, if the work itself changed. If they had a greater chance of standing up to the foremen and things like that.

[01:34:42] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The foremen were never separated from them in that sense.

[01:34:46] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[01:34:46] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They were workers, too. But, the thing that changed most was these gosh-awful hours. They wanted a six-hour day. They still have a six-hour day. And they actually worked on a six-hour day from '34 till the war almost. So you could almost depend on 36 hours a week.

[01:35:08] **HOWARD:** I thought they put in eight hours and just got two overtime.

[01:35:11] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's right, they put in eight hours sometimes.

[01:35:13] **HOWARD:** Ok.

[01:35:13] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** But a long of the time they worked only six hours. They came home at three o'clock. And it was beautiful. You were exhausted; you had a day left to live in. You knew that tomorrow you'd go back and do another six hours. That was what we ought to all have, all of us.

[01:35:31] **HOWARD:** Yeah, I agree.

[01:35:32] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Six hour day.

[01:35:33] **HOWARD:** I agree. Makes a lot of sense.

[01:35:35] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Makes good sense.

[01:35:37] **HOWARD:** Solve a lot of the unemployment problem.

[01:35:38] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They kept their six hours, but it's adulterated by the fact that they do two hours' overtime, making it eight. But they never went more than 13, which was the other thing they gained. They could not work beyond 13 hours, even to finish a shift.

[01:35:52] **HOWARD:** How about work stoppages? Did you ever participate in work stoppages after 1934? Like little "quickie strikes," they called them?

[01:36:03] **PAUL:** I don't remember any of them. I think there was some, but I. . .

[01:36:08] **HOWARD:** Yeah. I know there were things over sling load limits. There were work stoppages over sling load limits. There were work stoppages over safety. But you don't remember any of that, after '34?

[01:36:24] **PAUL:** They wouldn't have a safety strike all over, just that gang that has a problem. I don't think you would call that a stoppage. You just have to wait till the superintendent comes on and makes the orders. If you worked there a long time, you know what's safe and what isn't safe. Some foreign ship comes in—which

we had nothing to say about the safety. Until you start working it and you find out. So, shipping lines, they're living up to it. They know if they don't live up to it, they'll lose time in a port. They could lose a lot of money holding up the ship. So they better have safety.

[01:37:42] **HOWARD:** Did you guys have more power on the job after 1934? Were you more powerful, able to get what you want?

[01:37:54] **PAUL:** Yeah, we had a steward in each gang. If there was anything that we wanted, the steward would get a hold of the gang boss. Not only the gang boss, but the ship boss. Ship boss is a guy that can make a decision. So it's pretty well sealed together. You don't make any funny moves or anything like that. If the gang decides it isn't safe, then they know it isn't safe.

[01:38:41] **HOWARD:** Let me move a couple years later, 1937 and '38, '39 even. Do you remember the scrap iron beef? Where the longshoremen refused in San Pedro to ship scrap iron to Japan? Do you remember that?

[01:39:03] **PAUL:** Yeah. . .

[01:39:05] **HOWARD:** About 1939 or '38. Picket line was set up. Do you remember any of that?

[01:39:13] **PAUL:** I don't remember, but I know I heard about it.

[01:39:18] **HOWARD:** But you don't remember.

[01:39:18] **PAUL:** I heard about it.

[01:39:18] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, he was there!

[01:39:19] **HOWARD:** That's what I thought. Can you illuminate us on this question at all?

[01:39:25] **PAUL:** We got a load of scrap iron here! [laughing]

[01:39:26] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I know the scrap iron situation. I know it [inaudible] .

[01:39:26] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[01:39:31] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** —but I know that they were successful. Kept the scrap iron from going to Japan. But I don't think that it—was there a '37 strike?

[01:39:45] **HOWARD:** No, it was later than that. I think it was '38 or '39.

[01:39:47] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We didn't have any strike after that until, what, '49?

[01:39:54] **HOWARD:** '45. . .

[01:39:55] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** '48?

[01:39:57] **HOWARD:** '46 and then '48.

[01:39:58] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** '48. But they never brought in scabs after '34.

[01:40:01] **HOWARD:** That's right.

[01:40:01] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Because they learned their lesson. It's too expensive. It didn't work.

[01:40:08] **HOWARD:** I was just wondering if—

[01:40:09] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** But I don't remember that—I remember that they did make a stink on the scrap iron. They were ahead of the country as far as understanding what was going on. Way ahead.

[01:40:22] **HOWARD:** I know. They really punished the local here in San Pedro. Where they pulled one in San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle, and they just slapped them on the wrist. Here, they actually dismissed the 26 workers who were involved. The union rotated them into various gangs so that they didn't lose any time.

[01:40:40] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right. This is exactly what they would do.

[01:40:43] **HOWARD:** I'm trying to understand why the men participated in it. What it meant to them. That sort of a thing. If he doesn't remember it, I guess—

[01:40:49] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I don't think—no, he wouldn't remember that kind of a thing. I think he remembers probably the '48 strike. We had soup kitchens in '34. Were there soup kitchens in '48? Remember any soup kitchens?

[01:40:53] **HOWARD:** I remember them in the '30s. '34 and '36.

[01:40:53] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, definitely. Maybe the big one was in '36. No, I think that they were able to function without additional—no, they had problems in '48, too.

[01:41:28] **HOWARD:** That was a big strike. The longest one.

[01:41:29] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** A long one. The length of it made it bad because the people—by that time the longshoremen were homebodies, families. They had to support things; they had bills, everything that they could lose.

[01:41:53] **HOWARD:** Let me move on to the war, then. World War II. Did you work during World War II as a longshoremen?

[01:42:02] **PAUL:** Did I? What year was it?

[01:42:13] **HOWARD:** [laughing] 'Thirty-nine, 1941-1944.

[01:42:25] **PAUL:** I must have worked, let's see. When did I quit working?

[01:42:32] **HOWARD:** You must have been working then, right. [laughing]

[01:42:34] **PAUL:** I've been away four, five, six years, something. I don't know.

[01:42:42] **HOWARD:** Do you remember anything about working during the war?

[01:42:51] **PAUL:** No, I don't. What's she laughing at? [Voice heard from another room]

[01:43:04] **HOWARD:** Talking to her friends. Do you remember anything about the 1948 strike, after the war? It was a big strike; it lasted a long time.

[01:43:15] **PAUL:** After the war? Which one?

[01:43:17] **HOWARD:** 1948. [pause] No?

Ok, let me ask you another kind of a question. A couple of years later, around 1950, the ILWU was expelled from the CIO. Do you remember that? Remember the CIO expelled the ILWU? Remember that?

[01:43:50] **PAUL:** What was that?

[01:43:50] **HOWARD:** In 1950, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the CIO, the national CIO, expelled 11 unions because they said they were led by communists. One of them was the ILWU. Do you remember that?

[01:44:10] **PAUL:** No, I don't remember that.

[01:44:12] **HOWARD:** Yeah. Ok. In Local 13 at that time, in San Pedro, do you remember any groups that formed against Bridges? That were organized against Harry Bridges?

[01:44:28] **PAUL:** Bridges? In Pedro?

[01:44:30] **HOWARD:** Yeah. Were they any that you remember? No? What did the men think—

[01:44:37] **PAUL:** He was more or less of a hero all the way through.

[01:44:39] **HOWARD:** Was he?

[01:44:49] **PAUL:** No, he had very little opposition as far as I know. I worked in 'Frisco for a while. [While] I was blacklisted in Pedro.

[01:45:04] **HOWARD:** When was that? Before 1934?

[01:45:06] **PAUL:** I think it was '34; I'm not sure.

[01:45:14] **HOWARD:** You think most of the men liked Bridges, right? Admired him?

[01:45:26] **PAUL:** Yeah, I think they do in 'Frisco. I'm not so sure. We don't have much to do with him down here. But he has no trouble getting re-elected at any time.

[01:45:40] **HOWARD:** That's true.

[01:45:42] **PAUL:** He's retired now, you know.

[01:45:43] **HOWARD:** Yeah, right.

[01:45:48] **PAUL:** No, he's pretty straightforward guy.

[01:45:54] **HOWARD:** The thing that's interesting to me is that Bridges is very radical, and he survived the Cold War when a lot of other radicals lost their jobs or were kicked out of unions.

[01:46:07] **PAUL:** When?

[01:46:09] **HOWARD:** The Cold War, when McCarthyism was going in the ‘50s. A lot of radical people lost their jobs.

[01:46:18] **PAUL:** In what?

[01:46:19] **HOWARD:** In the longshore industry. All over the country, though. A lot of radical unions—like the Mine, Mill union—you ever hear of them? The [International Federation of] Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. They were a radical union.

[01:46:35] **PAUL:** No, I don’t remember that.

[01:46:36] **HOWARD:** Ok. Well, I guess that’s probably all the questions I really have then. We’re done. [laughing]

[01:46:45] **PAUL:** [laughs] All right.

[01:46:46] **HOWARD:** Thanks.

[BREAK IN RECORDING OF INTERVIEW]

So I was asking him where he was in the war. [laughing] He didn’t remember, but you were working as a longshoreman, right?

[01:47:10] **PAUL:** What?

[01:47:11] **HOWARD:** Working as a longshoreman during World War II?

[01:47:14] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It’s a good thing he forgot that. Because he never worked in the daytime.

[01:47:20] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right?

[01:47:20] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He worked 11 years at night.

[01:47:23] **HOWARD:** From what period?

[01:47:27] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** All during the war at night.

[01:47:28] **PAUL:** Let’s see, sixty. . .

[01:47:29] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, he lived in San Francisco.

[01:47:31] **HOWARD:** Now, what was the story behind that? There wasn’t much work in this harbor at the beginning of the war.

[01:47:35] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh, yes, there was work here, but before the war cargo went out of San Francisco [inaudible] told the men that they could go up there and work, and he said yes because he didn’t have any children. He could make the move without having a problem. In making the move, it would be harder for those who had homes and children. So he and quite a number of them went up there.

[01:48:06] **HOWARD:** How many would you guess went up? Do you have any idea? Percentage-wise or any other way.

[01:48:18] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'd guess maybe a hundred. Maybe more, I don't know. I really don't know. There were quite a few San Pedro fellows up there in San Francisco. They were essential industries; they didn't go to war, you see. He went up there with that in mind. When the war was over—let's see, the war was over in '45, wasn't it?

[01:48:35] **HOWARD:** '44-ish, wasn't it? Or was it '45?

[01:48:46] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** '44! When the war was over, the San Francisco local then said, "You either go back to your own local now"—they had a permit to work there—"or you join the union in San Francisco." Of course, at that point, the sunshine—he'd had enough of the rain and the fog of San Francisco and two months' release in April to October—it was time to go back to San Pedro.

[01:49:20] **PAUL:** So he worked the entire war period up there?

[01:49:23] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Not quite. Almost all, at night, and I think all of the time he was lashing, putting cargo on things.

[01:49:37] **HOWARD:** Of the hundred or so that went up there to Local 10 during the war, what proportion of them do you think returned to Local 13 after the war?

[01:49:46] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'd say 35 percent.

[01:49:48] **HOWARD:** 35 percent, ok. I'll tell you the reason I'm asking these questions. One of the questions in the deradicalization of labor after the war is people said that workers who had built up solidarities among themselves during the '30s when the CIO was on the rise were then splintered during the war because they were drafted or they went to other industries.

[01:50:10] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh, I see.

[01:50:10] **HOWARD:** And sort of broke up the solidarity and the common bonds, experiences they had had. I'm trying to see whether that took place in the ILWU or not. From the sounds of it, it looks like they were reconstituted as groups after the war.

[01:50:23] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think so.

[01:50:24] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[01:50:25] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And some of them were drafted or went to war, too. They used tell a story about one guy, [?Carl O'May?] , who had a big loud voice. They said, "Yeah, we knew where he was during the war. He was. He was giving orders on the island about a thousand miles away. We could hear him yelling."

[01:50:48] **HOWARD:** [laughing]

[01:50:49] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That was just this standard story. We all knew who [?Carl O'May?] was.

[01:50:59] **HOWARD:** I think I've heard of him. Was he highly decorated or something?

[01:51:01] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He may have been. He certainly never spoke about it.

[01:51:05] **HOWARD:** Oh, and he was in the longshore battalion, I bet. Wasn't he? Or do you know?

[01:51:08] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He was working on cargo. He was a supervisor, getting cargo off the boats.

[01:51:20] **HOWARD:** Civilian or military? Military, right?

[01:51:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Colonel, so he must have been military. I'm pretty sure he was military.

[01:51:23] **HOWARD:** Yeah. Do you remember anything about the '48 strike?

[01:51:37] **PAUL:** On the waterfront?

[01:51:38] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[01:51:39] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think Paul was in charge of getting supplies for the soup kitchen. Was there a soup kitchen then?

[01:51:52] **HOWARD:** I don't know; there may have been. Probably would have been local by local, I think.

[01:51:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm sure he was in charge of getting supplies for the soup kitchen.

[01:52:01] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[01:52:02] **PAUL:** I wasn't retired then?

[01:52:03] **HOWARD:** No, you were still working.

[01:52:05] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He wasn't retired as long as they had a strike going on.

[01:52:08] **HOWARD:** Yeah.

[01:52:08] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, they've had one since, I think.

[01:52:10] **HOWARD:** '71, I guess.

[01:52:12] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** [inaudible] . No, he wasn't retired. He was getting supplies from the soup kitchen because—and also got welfare for the strikers through the director in Long Beach, Mr. [?Lopez?] . [?Lopez?] has been one of the Socialist Worker party members back in the—

[01:52:39] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right? [laughing]

[01:52:40] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah, and is a friend of a good friend of ours who also had been a member of that at that time. Of course, his sympathies were with the workers. He did allow them to have welfare, so he didn't starve them during the strike. He also was instrumental, or helped, to get credit extended so they didn't lose their cars and their homes. So that there was a moratorium on that kind of a thing.

[01:53:11] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right?

[01:53:12] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's right. I was working, but I know that he kept us from starving and a few other families. That made a difference.

[01:53:23] **HOWARD:** In the '48 strike, the principal issue became after a while when they'd reached the wage demands that the union had made, that they would not negotiate with a union that had a communist at its head, or ex-communist. Do you remember how the men were talking about that? Did they take that stuff seriously or—

[01:53:38] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, it wasn't an issue.

[01:53:40] **HOWARD:** Never was?

[01:53:40] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** As far as I'm concerned, I never heard of it as an issue. It didn't make any difference because he wasn't a communist. He was so declared three times by the Supreme Court of the United States.

[01:53:51] **HOWARD:** Well, people still red-baited him in the local, I know that. In Local 10 and elsewhere, they certainly did.

[01:53:55] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Maybe in Local 10, but not in San Pedro.

[01:53:57] **HOWARD:** Not so much here?

[01:53:59] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, no. The election was different. They're more liberal in Local 13 than they are in Local 10.

[01:54:07] **HOWARD:** Boy, that doesn't square with anything I've heard. You're saying they're more liberal in Local 13 than 10.

[01:54:12] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Uh-huh. Maybe not at the present time, but they were at that time. They were more stuffy in San Francisco than they were in—-

[01:54:20] **HOWARD:** There was more opposition in Local 10 than anywhere else for Bridges; I know that.

[01:54:23] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right.

[01:54:24] **HOWARD:** But I've always heard that the two most conservative locals on the coast were [Local] 19, first of all, in Seattle, and then Local 13 in L.A. Then Portland [Local] and Local 10 [San Francisco] were pretty close together on the left. No?

[01:54:36] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I would say just the other way around.

[01:54:37] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[01:54:38] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's been my impression.

[01:54:39] **HOWARD:** That's interesting.

[01:54:41] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Because I've known many of the men that have been at the head of the Local 13. I wouldn't say that they were conservatives at all. Even right up to Art Almeida, who they run him down now because he's working on the other side, but I say he's a fine liberal. It's fine they have someone who knows the working class working on their side too. Isn't it? I have no issue with him at all.

[01:55:10] **HOWARD:** Local 13. So you're saying it was one of the more liberal. Do you remember any organized opposition to Bridges during the early '50s? Like, he took a stand on the Korean War that was very unpopular.

[01:55:22] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** No, I don't remember any of that.

[01:55:22] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[01:55:23] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Because I was active myself on the home front. [inaudible] . Maybe Paul would remember that? I don't know. I don't think he was involved in that kind of politicking.

[01:55:39] **HOWARD:** Yeah. Do you remember anything in Local 13 around 1949-1950, any attacks on Bridges or any groups that were organizing who didn't like Bridges? Or anything at all like that? Were there any groups that formed in the union, like a pro-Bridges group and an anti-Bridges group?

[01:56:07] **PAUL:** An opposition?

[01:56:08] **HOWARD:** Yeah, an opposition in Local 13 to Harry Bridges?

[01:56:13] **PAUL:** I don't remember any.

[01:56:14] **HOWARD:** You don't remember anything like that?

[01:56:17] **PAUL:** No, I think, if it was, I wouldn't be [inaudible] because. . .

[01:56:29] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** [inaudible] .

[01:56:29] **PAUL:** What year was it?

[01:56:30] **HOWARD:** '49, 1950, '51.

[01:56:31] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Because he was pretty well supported because he was getting attacked all the time by the—you know, they were saying he was a communist. I think they couldn't turn their back on that.

[01:56:46] **HOWARD:** What about the "dirty dozen" [workers loyal to the ILA] and those guys?

[01:56:48] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh, that's a different story. That was a slip.

[01:56:52] **HOWARD:** Ok, but why was it a different story?

[01:56:54] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, that has nothing to do with Harry Bridges.

[01:56:59] **HOWARD:** You don't think so?

[01:57:16] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I don't think so. Bridges was active in San Francisco. The Dirty Dozen were in Los Angeles. That was their leadership in San Pedro that tried to break away [inaudible] . Trying to establish. . .

[01:57:21] **HOWARD:** Well, at one point, they didn't want to go into the CIO. Early on. Then I thought they were still active and kind of dormant during the war. Then they might have been—

[01:57:30] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh no, no, no. They were out long before the war.

[01:57:30] **HOWARD:** Oh, they were?

[01:57:30] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh, absolutely. They were outcast long before the war. [inaudible] . But they went off the—they were all removed from the waterfront. Had to find other alternatives and were ostracized. [inaudible] .

[01:57:32] **HOWARD:** Well, the last question I have is the one we talked about out there—how Bridges was able to survive as long as he did. I may ask Paul first. Harry Bridges, right? Big radical—was Harry Bridges a radical in your mind? Do you think Harry Bridges was a radical?

[01:58:30] **PAUL:** Well, I would consider him a radical, yes.

[01:58:33] **HOWARD:** Ok.

[01:58:34] **PAUL:** He never was a member of the Wobblies.

[01:58:38] **HOWARD:** He said he was in 1921.

[01:58:40] **PAUL:** I don't think so. I'm pretty sure.

[01:58:43] **HOWARD:** He said he joined the Wobblies in New Orleans for about six months when he went out on strike once, when he was a seaman. But that he got out of the organization.

[01:58:47] **PAUL:** Yeah, that could be.

[01:58:47] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Did he say he was a member of the IWW?

[01:58:48] **HOWARD:** Yeah. In New Orleans.

[01:58:50] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I believe he was for a little while.

[01:58:55] **HOWARD:** Yeah, in '21.

[01:58:56] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Uh-huh.

[01:59:00] **HOWARD:** And he got out of it for the same reason that a lot of people later split with them—over the question of political tactics and things like that.

[Addressing Paul] Why do you think Harry Bridges was able to stay as president of the union so long? Did the men support him?

[01:59:24] **PAUL:** The membership supported him, yeah.

[01:59:27] **HOWARD:** Because he was a radical? Or because he was a good union man?

[01:59:30] **PAUL:** I wouldn't say that he was going to overthrow the system or anything like that. I never heard him say that. That is he wasn't interested.

He would be on the right side of every question. He didn't have much opposition. 'Frisco is an unusual city. It's a working man's city. Although the mayors and other officers were more or less on the left hand side, but they were not revolutionaries. The main thing is, the workers have the—

[END PART FOUR]